



**REMARKS BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR PALAN MULONDA
ON SECURITY THREATS FACED BY ZAMBIA AS A RESULT OF NARCOTICS
TRADE**

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INTRODUCTION

Zambia like all countries in the World has not been spared by the threats that narcotics trade poses. This is the more reason why the Zambian government has put in place an institutional and legal frame work to keep in check the threats and effects of narcotics trade.

The mandate for doing this lies with the Drug Enforcement Commission which is one of the wings of the government responsible for maintaining internal security.

The Commission which has operations in all the provinces of the Country is mandated with investigative and prosecutorial functions, though with recent changes, the prosecutorial function will now be directly undertaken by the National Prosecutions Authority under the oversight of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP). In addition to having investigative and prosecutorial functions, which are reactive in nature, the Drug Enforcement Commission also performs proactive educational and rehabilitative activities in collaboration with various stakeholders within and beyond our borders, in schools, workplaces and high human density facilities such as bus stations and markets.

Legal Status

There are various offences that an individual found with illicit drugs can be charged with under the laws of Zambia as outlined below:-

- Possession - being found in possession of any illicit drug in quantities that are less than 0.5 grams in weight
- Trafficking - being found in possession of that drugs weighing 0.5 grams or more
- Cultivation - being found with plants or that drugs
- Unlawful use - using prohibited or controlled drugs by smoking, injecting, sniffing, drinking etc

Trafficking is a non-bailable offence. It belongs to the category of serious crimes that are custodial in nature while the accused awaits trial.

The narcotic drugs or psychotropic substance commonly possessed, trafficked, grown or unlawfully used include, cocaine pellets, Marijuana(Commonly called Cannabis), Miraa, Heroin and ephedrine. All these substances with the exception of Marijuana are produced outside Zambia and were initially, consumed outside the country, with Zambia being a transit point. The situation has since changed as a black market more or less exists for consumers.

Statistics show that Marijuana(Cannabis) is the most commonly grown all across the globe, most popular illegal drug with the highest availability and grown in some countries for industrial and medicinal use. It is also interesting to note that some countries have legalised its use for recreational purposes. Other drugs such as heroin, cocaine are generally trafficked drugs coming out of South East Asia, central America, and Latin America. Africa, sadly is joining the ranks of end users such as the U.S.A. and Europe.

The threats posed by the narcotics trade on Africa and Zambia in particular are that, if allowed to take root, law and order essential for the welfare of society become highly compromised.

Statistics on heinous crimes have shown a close link to drug trade and use. The trade has tended to target the vulnerable in society who do not have the resources to finance the addiction once it takes root. The result of this, are high crime rates which mainly threaten national security such as, murder, rape, defilement, domestic violence. Areas of high consumption have become both unsafe for residents and law enforcers. Worse still is when the use finds its place in public places and learning institutions. The narcotic trade, has the potential of turning a country into a safe haven for terrorists, pirates and drug lords themselves, as it always tends to compromise law enforcers and those that administer justice. In short

it threatens the internal and subsequently regional security of a country.

Zambia, I must state has been and continues, to be a shining example in the region in so far as making the country drug free. The rates of arrests and convictions attests to this fact. However, the trade it must be acknowledged is "lucrative" and this makes it a very serious threat to our security and well being as a country, should there be any lapse in law enforcement.

The potential threats posed by illegal drug trade on our country are well appreciated, such as distortion of the economy through money laundering, proliferation of illegal arms trade, terrorist -threats i.e source of revenue for terrorists, juvenile delinquency, spread of HIV/AIDS, mental retardation of citizens and erosion of good governance once drug lords are allowed to finance politicians or get involved in politics themselves.

In conclusion, allow me to state that narcotics trade with its associates crimes in Zambia's real threat to internal security as it has the potential of not only catalyzing crime but sustaining. It is also true that the only way to keep this threat in check is by being proactive through investing in a sound legal and institutional framework and attending to factors that cause citizens to engage in it.

